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# THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLK-LORE.

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## THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY.

THE Third Annual Meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society was held at the Columbian University, Washington, D. C., on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 29th and 30th.

The Society was called to order at 11 A. M., President Mason in the chair.

The President remarked that in the last decade of the nineteenth century, when all the world was looking forward, it was a relief to vary this mental attitude by occasionally glancing backward, and considering the past as it appeared by its survival in the present. The records of the past formed an essential element in the interpretation of the future. He introduced President Welling of the University, who made an address of welcome.

President Welling said that on behalf of the Trustees of the University, and in the name of his colleagues in the faculty, he bade the Society heartily welcome. It was a happy incident of the evolution of science, that a society is formed for the scientific study of folk-lore, of the fragments of history preserved in tradition. These must be interpreted by reason, excluding false hypotheses and conclusions. He used the illustration of the young apprentice, who, as the story related, out of bits of glass dropped by his master, formed the illuminated window of Lincoln cathedral; in this way it might well be that the neglected remainder of antiquarian knowledge might make a whole more brilliant than its accepted elements, as Walter Scott, in incorporating refuse bits of history into his wonderful romances, had delineated the most valuable picture of the times to which they related, as preserving their spirit. But this fragmentary material must address itself to the interpretative reason. It was not until the rays of stars had been examined under the spectroscope, that we learned their actual constitution; in the same manner, as between more than Fraunhofer lines, we could read the spectra of civilizations long passed away. Horace Walpole had boasted that he

knew nothing about the ages that had known nothing; but for his own part, he knew no such ages.

On behalf of the Anthropological Society of Washington, an address was made by Major John W. Powell, Director of the Bureau of Ethnology.

Major Powell said that the various sciences had now been differentiated into a great number of departments, each cultivated by an army of investigators. The history of civilization was marked by temples of philosophies which had fallen into ruins. The last endeavor of the sort had been made by Herbert Spencer, a structure as unstable as the others.

The only hope for any successful philosophy of the future was that a system might be gradually erected by the united efforts of all thinkers and investigators, as the final generalization of their labors. Archæology took part in this labor, by its research into the efforts of the artists and artisans of the past, for this purpose opening tombs and mounds, exploring the buried cities of the world, and in a great variety of ways making studies in human culture as exhibited in the arts. Other students engaged in the examination of constitutions, laws, forms of government, national, local, and municipal, and endeavored to understand the organization of former societies, carrying their inquiries into the heart of savagery and barbarism. A third kind of knowledge was that of the languages of mankind, including not only those of civilization, but of the lowest peoples. In pursuit of this class of studies, linguistic societies had been formed. Fourthly came psychology now pursued by scientific methods in all institutions of learning. Last of all might be named philosophy, — the understanding of those attempts at interpreting the unknown which had been made by the great schools of the past and by celebrated masters, such as Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, or Hegel. But in these latter days it had dawned upon the minds of men that it might be interesting to know not merely what were the conceptions of distinguished individuals, but also those entertained by the multitude, — to examine the wisdom of the many as distinct from the wisdom of the few, — to comprehend the learning, the expectation, and the philosophic conceptions of the people, — that is to say, folk-lore. For this purpose a new society had been formed, the material with which it is concerned being a part of the province of anthropology, as anthropology itself is only a portion of the universal science.

In what manner have the facts of the universe been understood? Even among the most savage peoples there have been attempts at such understanding, the general feature of these being that they know more about what we consider as the unknown than about what

is known. To comprehend the manner in which unknown things have been explained is the task of Folk-Lore Societies of the present day. Of systems of explanation, there have been in especial three. In savagery, all events are attributed to the agency of animals. Coming to a later stage, to the era of barbarism, we find it characterized by the power attributed to personified forces of nature, to gods of the day, the night, and the like. To this philosophy has been given the name of physitheism. Men attribute everything unknown to them to the influence of such personified beings. Proceeding to the beginnings of civilization, a new method of interpretation presents itself. Occurrences are explained as the acts of spirits, to whom is assigned everything mysterious.

At the present day, these three methods of accounting for phenomena coexist. In searching into the conceptions held by men in our own time, we are therefore dealing with notions which represent successive stages of philosophy. He was glad to welcome explorers in the field of popular belief.

Mrs. J. M. Lander, Mrs. W. H. Seaman, and Miss Emily T. Mason presented credentials as delegates from the Women's Anthropological Society of Washington, and Mr. A. F. Chamberlain from the Canadian Institute.

The Society proceeded to hear the reading of papers. (These it is intended to print, either as a whole or by abstract, in the numbers of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* for the current year.) The papers read and discussed during the meeting on Tuesday were as follows : —

Mr. Frank Hamilton Cushing, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D. C. : Story of the Unborn Men or Villagers of the Underworld ; a Zuni folk-tale.

Mr. Alexander Francis Chamberlain, Toronto, Ont. : Human Physiognomy and Physical Characteristics in Folk-Lore.

Mr. William Wells Newell, Cambridge, Mass. : Remarks on American Burial Customs.

Prof. Alcée Fortier, Tulane University, New Orleans, La. : A Few Louisiana Folk-Lore Stories (translations of French tales).

Miss Alice C. Fletcher, Washington, D. C. Holder of the Thaw Fellowship of the Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Mass. : Folk-Tales of the Nimipu or Nez Percés Indians.

In the evening, a discussion took place on the place of Folk-Lore in Anthropology, led by the President of the Society.

Mr. Walter Hough, Local Secretary of the Annual Meeting, gave an account of Folk-life in and about the National Capital, illustrated by photographs taken for the purpose.

On Wednesday, at 10 A. M., the Society met for the transaction of business.

Mr. Walter Hough, Mr. A. F. Chamberlain, and Mr. Perry B. Pierce were appointed a committee for the purpose of nominating officers for the ensuing year.

The Report of the Council for the year 1891 was read by the Secretary, as follows :—

The Council is glad to be able to report satisfactory progress during the year. It would appear that the Society now occupies a position which gives good reason to hope for its rapid growth in membership and utility.

The principal means by which it is hoped to increase the influence of the Society is by the establishment of local societies, which may coöperate with the general organization, while at the same time preserving individual independence and initiative. It would seem that there is no better basis for such meetings than that afforded by observation of the different elements which compose the population of American towns. In the interests of history it is desirable to make studies of the character, ideas, and gradual assimilation of these elements. In all the larger cities opportunity is thus offered to come into close contact with the life and thought of many races, making an instructive and entertaining field of investigation.

In their last Annual Report the Council called attention to the opportunity for original inquiry offered by the traditions, beliefs, and customs of aboriginal races. They pointed out the rapidity with which the opportunity is passing away, and the likelihood that, in consequence of incomplete record, many problems will remain unsettled, the solution of which is highly important to the history of thought. During the past year these observations have received vivid illustration; the religious movement among many Indian tribes has exhibited the rapidity with which the ideas of civilization are extending among the latter; while rites and customs are daily ceasing to be celebrated, or modifying their character. The least which can be expected of Americans is to take the necessary pains for preserving an account of this primitive life, the memory of which all succeeding generations will regard as a precious possession.

It appears to the Council that the time has now arrived when this Society may take a more active part than formerly in promoting these investigations, not only without interfering with any agency now in existence, but in such a manner as to promote the methods and objects of all such agencies. The first principal method by which research may be encouraged is by providing for necessary publication. At the present time there exist no adequate means by which the investigations of individual explorers in this field can be printed; and there can be no better aid to students than by pro-

viding for putting into permanent form the result of their labors. As a step in this direction, the Society proposes, as soon as possible, to begin the publication of a series of monographs to be entitled, "The Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society." The first volume of this series is expected to be ready in the latter part of the year.

The Council has received and accepted reports from the Secretary, Treasurer, and Editorial Committee.

The Secretary reports that he has on his books the names of 8 Life Members and 442 Annual Members, while, either directly or through the publishers, sixty libraries are subscribers to the publications of the Society.

The summary of the Treasurer's report is as follows:—

#### RECEIPTS.

From W. W. Newell, acting Treasurer for 1890	.	\$347.80
Fees, December 4, 1890, to December 28, 1891	.	1,329.00
Life memberships	.	100.00
Sale of Journals, and covers	.	53.40
Interest on money invested	.	15.50
Other sources	.	10.22
Total	.	<u>\$1,855.92</u>

#### EXPENSES.

H. O. Houghton & Co., for printing Journal	\$1,102.96
Other expenses, postage, etc.	<u>115.20</u>
Total	<u>1,218.16</u>
Balance to new account	<u>\$637.76</u>

The Editorial Committee report that during the year 1891 the only publication of the Society has been the Journal of American Folk-Lore, the conduct of which has been committed to the charge of the Secretary. The ideas and motives which have directed the selection of matter have not varied from the methods previously announced.

The date of publication has been retarded more than is agreeable; in future it is hoped to secure greater regularity in the time of its appearance.

If the Society shall succeed in establishing a larger number of local branches, a tolerably full abstract of the proceedings of these would make an important part of the Journal; the ideas and topics of one local Society would furnish suggestions for the meetings of

others ; and papers of permanent value and originality, contributed to local meetings, would naturally be included in the Journal of the general Society. The stimulus thus offered would no doubt result in a considerable increase of the attention paid to the study of the different branches of folk-lore.

The Committee on Nomination of Officers for 1892 made their report, which was adopted by acclamation, as follows :—

President, Prof. Frederic Ward Putnam, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Council. — Hon. Charles C. Baldwin, Cleveland, Ohio ; Dr. Franz Boas, Clark University, Worcester, Mass. ; Dr. H. Carrington Bolton, New York, N. Y. ; Prof. Daniel G. Brinton, M. D., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. ; Prof. Thomas Frederick Crane, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. ; Mr. Stewart Culin, Philadelphia, Pa. ; Dr. James Deans, Victoria, B. C. ; Rev. J. Owen Dorsey, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D. C. ; Miss Alice C. Fletcher, Washington, D. C., Holder of the Thaw Fellowship of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University ; Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, Hemenway Southwestern Exploring Expedition, Boston, Mass. ; Prof. Alcée Fortier, Tulane University, New Orleans, La. ; Prof. Horatio Hale, Clinton, Ont. ; Mr. Charles Godfrey Leland, Florence, Italy ; Prof. Otis T. Mason, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

The President gave notice of an amendment to the rules, to come up for action at the next Annual Meeting, by which the Presidents of local societies should, *ex officio*, become members of the Council, in addition to the fourteen Councillors now provided for : also, of an amendment by which retiring presidents should be added to the Council.

The formation, by vote of the Council, of the following committees, was announced :—

Committee on Additional Publications. — Major John W. Powell, Dr. Franz Boas, Prof. Daniel G. Brinton, Prof. Thomas Frederick Crane, Mr. Stewart Culin, Prof. Alcée Fortier, and the President and Secretary, *ex officio*.

Committee on Revision of Rules and Incorporation of the Society. — Prof. Otis T. Mason, Hon. Charles C. Baldwin, Dr. H. Carrington Bolton, Rev. J. Owen Dorsey, Dr. J. Walter Fewkes.

Editorial Committee. — Dr. Franz Boas, Prof. Daniel G. Brinton, Prof. Thomas Frederick Crane, Rev. J. Owen Dorsey, John H. Hinton, M. D., Mr. William Wells Newell, Prof. Frederic Ward Putnam.

Committee on Correspondence with Local Societies. — Miss Alice C. Fletcher, Prof. Alcée Fortier, Prof. Frederic Ward Putnam, Prof. Calvin Thomas.

Committee on the Conduct of the Annual Meeting, 1892. — Mr. Walter Hough, Local Secretary of the Annual Meeting for 1891, the Retiring President, and the Secretary.

It was voted by the Council that the Annual Meeting for 1892 should be held in Boston, Mass., the date to be hereafter determined.

The Local Secretary read the following list of members elected : — Mr. Paul Brockett, Mr. William Dinwiddie, Mrs. Edward Goodfellow, Mr. Frederic Webb Hodge, Rev. Sheldon Jackson, Mr. S. H. Kaufmann, Mr. Perry B. Pierce, Mr. James C. Pilling, Mr. E. Francis Riggs, Paymaster Eustace B. Rogers, U. S. A., Mr. Thomas W. Smillie, Mr. George Rockford Stetson, Mr. William B. Taylor, Mrs. A. H. Thompson, all of Washington ; Hon. C. E. Belknap, House of Representatives ; Mr. Warren K. Moorehead, Xenia, Ohio ; Prof. Merwin Marie Snell, Catholic University of Ohio.

The papers read and discussed at the sessions on Wednesday were : —

Mrs. Fanny D. Bergen, Cambridge, Mass. : Some Bits of Plant-Lore.

Dr. James Deans, Victoria, B. C. : a Haida Folk-Tale.

Rev. J. Owen Dorsey, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D. C. : Nanibozhu in Siouan Mythology.

Mr. Alexander Francis Chamberlain, Toronto, Ont. : A Mississagua Legend of Nanibozhu.

Hon. C. E. Belknap, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C. : An Indian Legend of the Trailing Arbutus (from Lake Superior).

Miss Alice C. Fletcher, Washington, D. C. : The Haethuska Society among the Omahas.

Mr. James Mooney, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D. C. : Cherokee Talismans.

Mr. J. N. B. Hewitt, Washington, D. C. : Thadodaho and the Founding of the Iroquois League.

Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, Hemenway Exploring Expedition, Boston, Mass. : The Ceremonial Circuit among the Hopi Indians.

Mr. Frank Hamilton Cushing, Washington, D. C. : A Zuñi Version of the Italian Folk-Tale of the Cock and the Mouse.

On Wednesday afternoon, Prof. Mason, President of the Society, gave a reception at his house, which was numerously attended by the members of the Society and their friends.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Columbian University, to the Women's Anthropological Society, and to the local officers of the meeting.



The following is a list of the committees concerned with the organization of the meeting : —

Committee on Arrangements. — J. Owen Dorsey, Wm. H. Babcock, William Dinwiddie, Weston Flint, F. Webb Hodge, L. D. Lodge ; Perry B. Pierce (U. S. Patent Office), Treasurer.

Reception Committee. — Thomas Wilson, J. H. Gore, Mrs. Helen Kane, Mrs. T. C. Mendenhall, Mrs. A. H. Thompson, Mrs. Miranda Tulloch, Mrs. Thomas Wilson.

Committee on Programme — Major J. W. Powell, Chairman ; W. W. Newell, O. T. Mason.

Delegates from the Anthropological Society of Washington. — President J. C. Welling, J. W. Powell.

Delegates from the Women's Anthropological Society. — Mrs. J. M. Lander, Mrs. W. H. Seaman, Miss Emily T. Mason.